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SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS

Peter ON THE *Mission*

ELECTION

OF A

PRESIDENT:

ADDRESSED TO THE

Citizens of the United States. *f A.*

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NEW-YORK:

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Section. Considerations

Fellow Citizens

THE time is drawing near, when you will be called to give your voice in the election of a President. In the exercise of this important privilege, it will be necessary that great deliberation is necessary, and a choice of a suitable person depends. The welfare of our nation, therefore, will be received by you with candour, and allowed all the weight to which you may think them entitled. The writer of them is neither held, nor does he expect ever to hold any office under government; he means not to be an advocate for any particular man; he is not actuated by a mere regard to the political principles of any party; but, if his heart deceive him not, by a sincere desire for the public welfare.



Serious Considerations.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THE time is drawing near, when you will be called to give your voice in the election of a President. In the exercise of this important privilege, it will be granted, that great deliberation is necessary; and that upon the choice of a suitable person depends, under Divine Providence, the prosperity of our nation. A few considerations, therefore, will be received by you with candour, and allowed all the weight to which you may think them entitled. The writer of them has neither held, nor does he expect ever to hold any office under government; he means not to be an advocate for any particular man; he is not actuated by a mere regard to the political principles of any party; but, if his heart deceive him not, by a sincere desire for the public welfare.

It is well understood that the Honorable Thomas Jefferson is a candidate for the Chief Magistracy of the United States, and that a number of our citizens will give him all their support. I would not presume to dictate to you *who* ought to be President, but entreat you to hear with patience my reasons why *he* ought not.

To the declarations of disinterestedness and sincerity already made, I think it proper to add, that I have no personal resentment whatever against Mr. Jefferson, and that it is with pain I oppose him; that I never was in his company, and would hardly know him; that I honor him as holding a high office in government; that I admire his talents, and feel grateful for the services which he has been instrumental in rendering to his country; and that my objection to his being promoted to the Presidency is founded singly upon his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures; or, in other words, his rejection of the Christian Religion and open profession of Deism.

NOTWITHSTANDING the general character of Mr. Jefferson, and the proofs of his Deistical principles which have been partly published, at different times, there are some who still doubt; or, if they admit the truth, are disposed to say that he is no worse than his opponents. Whether he is

worse or not will be shown hereafter. When the spirit of party is so violent as we have seen it in this country, and the vilest calumnies have been propagated respecting the best characters, it is not surprising that the reports which are circulated should be received with caution, especially when there is not ready access to the highest and most infallible sources of information. I shall endeavour in this address, to present to your view the collective evidence of Mr. Jefferson's principles as to religion, and show you why such a man ought not to be honored and entrusted with the office of chief magistrate. This I hope to do principally from Mr. Jefferson's own writings, and in such a manner that neither he or any of his friends shall be able justly to charge me with the least misrepresentation.

BESIDES the publications acknowledged by a man, some dependence may be fairly placed upon his general character, and his conversation as related by men of intelligence and veracity. The world is seldom mistaken as to a man's talents and moral principles; and we safely rely upon respectable testimony. The avowal, therefore, of sentiments in conversation which shall be related, cannot be doubted, from the nature of the authority; and our belief will be strengthened when this is viewed in connection with the written evidence.

IN the work of Mr. Jefferson, entitled "*Notes on the state of Virginia*," what he says on the subject of the deluge, is a clear proof of his disrespect for divine revelation. He opposes the opinion, that the shells found on the tops of high mountains ought to be considered as a proof of an universal deluge. He endeavours to show, that if the whole contents of the atmosphere were water, the lands could be overflowed to the height of $52\frac{1}{2}$ feet only, and that in Virginia this would be a very small proportion even of the champaign country. He rejects a second opinion, that "the bed of the ocean, has, by some great convulsion of nature, been heaved to the heights at which we now find shells and other remains of marine animals." He rejects likewise a third solution suggested by Voltaire.—"There is a wonder," says Mr. Jefferson, "somewhere; is it greatest on this branch of the dilemma, on that which supposes the existence of a power, of which we have no evidence in any other case; or on the first, which requires us to believe the creation of a body of water, and its subsequent annihilation? The three hypotheses are equally unsatisfactory, and we must be contented to acknowledge, that this great phenomenon is as yet unsolved. Ignorance is preferable to error; and he is less

"remote from the truth who believes nothing,
 "than he who believes what is wrong."*

LET it be remarked here, that could Mr. Jefferson sound, what he thought evidence, that the waters had ever covered the highest mountains, he would have admitted that solution as to the shells; but he attempts to show the improbability of such a quantity of water being produced, and consequently discredits the sacred history. The account given by the inspired writer, is, "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."† Moses mentions two causes of the deluge; *the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven*

* Page 28, to p. 31.—The edition which I use is that printed in Philadelphia, 1788. Mr. Jefferson has published, so late as the present year, an appendix to this work; but it relates wholly to the murder of Logan's family. There is not a retraction of, or even an apology for any of his sentiments, though he knows they have been repeatedly censured.

† Genesis vii. 11, 12, 19, 20.

were opened ; but Mr. Jefferson does not so much as name this old philosopher, while he indirectly denies the facts, or, like other infidels, cannot still get water enough to cover the mountains. Even a miracle is not sufficient with him, or rather his faith is too weak to receive a miracle. *Requires us*, says he, *to believe the creation of a body of water and its subsequent annihilation.* He is at liberty to philosophize if he pleases, on the causes of the deluge ; it is not my business at present (and I beg that it may be remembered) to refute his principles ; but only to show their inconsistency with the Holy Scriptures. I am not called then to controvert his positions, that *ignorance is preferable to error*, and that *he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing, than he who believes what is wrong* ; but I will be permitted to say, that it is safest for him to believe the Mosaic account of the deluge, though he should never find out a satisfactory solution ; yea, though he should adopt a wrong one.

AGAIN, upon the question, Whence the first inhabitants of America originated ? Mr. Jefferson is of opinion, that there are among the Indians a great variety of languages radically different, and from this circumstance, he argues the impossibility of their having emigrated from Asia. His words

are, "Arranging them under the radical ones to
 " which they may be palpably traced, and doing
 " the same by those of the red men of Asia, there
 " will be found probably, twenty in America, for
 " one in Asia, of those radical languages, so called,
 " because if they were ever the same, they have
 " lost all resemblance to one another. A separa-
 " tion into dialects may be the work of a few ages
 " only, but for two dialects to recede from one
 " another till they have lost all vestiges of their
 " common origin, must require an immense course
 " of time; perhaps not less than *many people give*
 " *to the age of the earth.* A greater number of
 " those radical changes of language having taken
 " place among the red men of America, proves
 " them of greater antiquity than those of Asia."*

I will not ask him here, what time *he* gives to the
 age of the earth? Whether he believes the scrip-
 ture chronology? Or, whether he believes the
 earth to be fourteen thousand years old, judging
 by the lavas in the neighbourhood of Mount Etna?
 Whether he depends most on the authority of
 Moses, or of Canonico Recupero?† What I wish

* Page 108.

† This man has been engaged in writing the history of
 Mount Etna. He has discovered a lava which, he says, must
 have flowed from the mountain at least fourteen thousand years
 ago. The Bishop of the Diocese advised him to take care not
 to make his mountain older than Moses. I have not heard the
 issue.

to be remarked is, that if the Indians did not emigrate from Asia, and are even of greater antiquity than the Asiatics, then the opinion is insinuated that they are a distinct race of men originally created and placed in America, contrary to the sacred history that all mankind have descended from a single pair. This was the opinion of Lord Kames, and is supported by the same argument of a variety of languages, in his *Sketches of the history of Man*.^{*} This is evidently the opinion of Mr. Jefferson; an opinion repugnant to sacred history, to the express declaration of the apostle, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," and striking at the root of the plan of salvation revealed in the gospel. To whom is the gospel to be preached? To the posterity of Adam only. To those of whom Adam was the natural and federal head. Salvation is purchased, and can be offered to no other race. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."[†]

^{*} See an excellent Essay on the causes of the variety of complexion and figure in the human species. To which are added, *Strictures on Lord Kames' discourse on the original diversity of mankind.* By the Rev. Dr. Samuel S. Smith. This work has justly acquired reputation in America and Europe, and has been translated into several languages.

[†] 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45.

EVERY doubt will be removed as to the sentiment of Mr. Jefferson, when we consider what he asserts more plainly respecting the negroes. After mentioning some distinctions between them and the white people, he says, "There are other physical distinctions proving a difference of race." He makes the blacks inferior to the whites in reason and imagination. He professes to take his examples not in Africa, but among the blacks born in this country, and who have enjoyed considerable advantages. He denies "that their inferiority is the effect merely of their condition of life;" says, that they improve by mixture with the whites; compares them with the Roman slaves who excelled in arts and science, but who "were of the race of whites;" and after a long discussion of the subject, concludes in this singular manner. "I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind. It is not against experience to suppose, that different species of the same genus, or varieties of the same species, may possess different qualifications. Will not a lover of natural history then, one who views the gradations in all the races of animals with the eye of philosophy, excuse an effort to keep those in the

"department of man as distinct as nature has formed them?"

CAN any man now doubt of Mr. Jefferson's real opinion, and of that opinion being directly opposite to divine revelation? In his conclusion he betrays, like a true infidel, an inconsistency with himself. Having laboured to point out physical and moral distinctions between the Whites and the Blacks, he advances it at last "as a *suspicion* only," that the latter were inferior to the former; having expressly asserted, that the distinctions mentioned, "*prove a difference of race*," now he modestly conveys the doubt, "whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances." Would a man who believes in a divine revelation even hint a suspicion of this kind? The last sentence, however, though curious, is clear enough as to Mr. Jefferson's real sentiment. It seems that he views his discussion as "an effort to keep those in the department of man as distinct as nature has formed them," and he prays to be *excused*. Observe that he pleads only for a *department*, a *distinct* one. Will the philosopher promise, if we indulge him, not to use his arguments hereafter in favor of the Ourang Outang?

Will he engage not to trouble us, by the varieties of colour, shape, and size, to fit up numerous other departments? The matter is too serious to jest with. Sir, we excuse you not! You have degraded the blacks from the rank which God hath given them in the scale of being! You have advanced the strongest argument for their state of slavery! You have insulted human nature! You have contemned the word of truth and the mean of salvation! And, whether you will excuse us or not, we exclude you, in your present belief, from any department among Christians!

THOUGH the sentiment of Mr. Jefferson is evident enough to every attentive reader, yet it may not be amiss to know the light in which it is understood in Europe. The Monthly Reviewers in London, in reviewing his Notes, say, "It is observable, that the Virginians, soon after the assertion of Independence, appointed a committee to revise their code of laws, and though the emancipation of negroe slaves, entered into the plan of reformation, yet the idea of their being an inferior species of the human genus, governed their regulations." After quoting the whole passage respecting the Blacks, they add, "We recollect a tract relating to the sugar trade, written in the name of John Gardner Kemys, esq. a Jamaica

“planter, in which the same argument was ex-
 “tended, by an appeal to facts, to connecting the
 “negroes with the Ourang Outang.”* This latter
 writer endeavoured “to prove that many negroes
 “are connected in blood with the Ourang Outang,
 “and that the importation of them contributed to
 “humanize the descendants of brutes.”†

UPON a plan proposed for the institution of
 schools in the state of Virginia, Mr. Jefferson says,
 “Instead of putting the Bible and Testament into
 “the hands of children, at an age when their
 “judgments are not sufficiently matured for religi-
 “ous inquiries, their memories may here be stored
 “with the most useful facts from Grecian, Roman,
 “European and American history. The first
 “elements of morality too may be instilled into
 “their minds; such as, when farther developed
 “as their judgments advance in strength, may
 “teach them how to work out their own greatest
 “happiness, &c.”‡ He mentions the Bible at last;

* Vol. 78, p. 379.

† In justice to Mr. Jefferson, it must be said that he is an
 advocate for the emancipation of the blacks; though unhappily,
 he has raised one of the greatest obstacles, by denying them to
 be the same species with the whites.

‡ Page 157.

for what purpose is easily seen. When the deluge and the origin of the blacks are under discussion, we do not hear a word about it. Moses is treated as an historian utterly unworthy of his notice.

I HAVE heard objections made to the Bible as a school-book, but never for the reason here given. A large part of the Bible consists of history, or is a relation of facts; and one would think that the minds of children are as equal to these as to any other; and that they would be more useful to them than the facts contained in profane history. The Bible is the most ancient, and the only authentic history in the world. Mr. Jefferson admits that "the first elements of morality may be instilled into the minds of children." Why not the first elements of religion, which are the foundation of all sound morality? Are the minds of children *matured* for the one, and not for the other? He has not told us when it is proper to teach them a little religion; and how we may prevent, in the meantime, irreligious principles. Indeed we hear no more about religion or the bible; nor does he think it necessary, for these elements of morality *may teach them how to work out their own greatest happiness*. If this be not a deistical education, I know not what is. Had he prized the bible, and been properly acquainted with its contents, he would

have known that the facts related in that book are the most ancient, the most authentic, the most interesting, and the most useful in the world; that they are above all others level to the capacities of children, calculated to impress their tender minds, and form them to live to God, to their country, and to themselves.

AFTER what has been produced, who can refuse his belief of what I shall now relate? When the late Rev. Dr. John B. Smith resided in Virginia, the famous MAZZEI happened one night to be his guest. Dr. Smith having, as usual, assembled his family for their evening devotions, the circumstance occasioned some discourse on religion, in which the Italian made no secret of his infidel principles. In the course of conversation he remarked to Dr. Smith, "Why, your great philosopher and statesman, Mr. Jefferson, is rather farther gone in infidelity than I am;" and related, in confirmation, the following anecdote; that as he was once riding with Mr. Jefferson, he expressed his "surprise that the people of this country take no better care of their public buildings." "What buildings?" exclaimed Mr. Jefferson. "Is not that a church?" replied he, pointing to a decayed edifice. "Yes," answered Mr. Jefferson. "I am astonished," said the

other, "that they permit it to be in so ruinous a condition." "It is good enough," rejoined Mr. Jefferson, "for him that was born in a manger!" Such a contemptuous fling at the blessed Jesus, could issue from the lips of no other than a deadly foe to his name and his cause.*

THERE is another passage in Mr. Jefferson's Notes which requires the most serious attention. In showing that civil rulers ought not to interfere with the rights of conscience, and that the legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as are injurious to others, he says, "It does me no injury for my neighbour to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket, nor breaks my leg."† The whole passage is written with a great degree of spirit. It is remarkable for that conciseness, perspicuity and force which characterize the style of Mr. Jefferson. Some have ventured, from the words I have quoted, to bring

* This story I had from Dr. Smith more than once, and he told it to, I know not how many. I applied to one gentleman, who I knew had heard it from Dr. Smith, and we agreed in the relation. There is no possibility of contradicting it, except by the improbable supposition that Maxci told a downright falsehood. Dr. Smith was one of the most faithful, zealous, and successful ministers in all this country. His memory will long be precious to those who knew him.

† Page 169.

even the charge of atheism against him. This is a high charge, and it becomes us carefully to examine the ground upon which it rests. Though the words themselves, their connection, and the design for which they are introduced may be insufficient to support it, yet there are concurrent circumstances to be taken into consideration, and which will fix at least a suspicion. These circumstances are, the general disregard of religious things, the associates at home and correspondents abroad, and the principles maintained in conversation. With these things I am not so well acquainted as many. I shall only mention what passed in conversation between Mr. Jefferson and a gentleman of distinguished talents and services, on the necessity of religion to government. The gentleman insisted that some religious faith and institutions of worship, claiming a divine origin, were necessary to the order and peace of society. Mr. Jefferson said that he differed widely from him, and that "he wished to see a government in which no religious opinions were held, and where the security for property and social order rested entirely upon the force of the laws." Would not this be a nation of Atheists? Is it not natural, after the free declaration of such a sentiment, to suspect the man himself of Atheism? Could one who is impressed with the existence of a God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, to whom we are under a law and accountable; and

the inseparable connection of this truth with the social order and the eternal happiness of mankind, express himself in this manner?

PUTTING the most favorable construction upon the words in the Notes, they are extremely reprehensible. Does not the belief influence the practice? How then can it be a matter of indifference what a man believes? The doctrine that a man's life may be good, let his faith be what it may, is contradictory to reason and the experience of mankind. It is true that a mere opinion of my neighbour will do me no injury, Government cannot regulate or punish it. The right of private opinion is inalienable. But let my neighbour once persuade himself that there is no God, and he will soon pick my pocket, and break not only my *leg* but my *neck*. If there be no God, there is no law; no future account; government then is the ordinance of man only, and we cannot be subject for conscience sake. No colours can paint the horrid effects of such a principle, and the deluge of miseries with which it would overwhelm the human race.

How strongly soever Mr. Jefferson may reason against the punishment by law of erroneous opinions, even of atheism, they are not the less frightful

and dangerous in their consequences. He admits the propriety of rejecting the testimony of an atheist in a court of justice, and of fixing a stigma upon him. Just such a stigma the United States ought to fix upon himself. Though neither the constitution, nor any law forbids his election, yet the public opinion ought to disqualify him. On account of his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures, and his attempts to discredit them, he ought to be rejected from the Presidency. No professed deist, be his talents and acquirements what they may, ought to be promoted to this place by the suffrages of a Christian nation. The greater his talents and the more extensive his acquirements, the greater will be his power and the more extensive his influence in poisoning mankind.

SOME of the friends of Mr. Jefferson, being ashamed that he should be reputed an infidel and wishing that he had a little religion, were it ever so little, whisper that he is a sort of a Christian. Rather than give him up, they hint that he is as good a christian as Dr. Priestley, or thereabouts. I shall not dispute a moment whether he is as good as Dr. Priestley, or Dr. Priestley as bad as him; but ask for the proofs of his professing christianity in any shape. How does he spend the Lord's day? Is he known to worship with any denomination of christ-

tians? Where? When? How often? Though going to church is no certain sign of a man not being an infidel, any more than his pretending a regard for the christian religion in his writings, yet a total or habitual neglect of public worship, must be admitted as a strong proof against him. That wretch Voltaire partook of the sacrament of the supper, while he blasphemed Christ, and endeavoured, with the malice of a devil, to extirpate his religion from the earth. Hume, Kames, Gibbons, and many infidels pretended a regard for divine revelation, while they sought indirectly and secretly to destroy its credibility. I have exhibited proofs of Mr. Jefferson's infidelity. I wait for the proofs that he is as good as even Dr. Priestley, which will be still bad enough; and I shall exceedingly rejoice if any man should be able to prove him better.

Let me ask your attention farther, while I briefly point out the effects which the election of Mr. Jefferson would produce.

1. It would give us an unfavorable character with foreign nations. We are as yet a young nation, under a government recently formed; and it is of considerable importance that we obtain respect and confidence abroad. There are now jealousies of us entertained, and reproaches cast

upon us. Two nations with whom we are most connected and from whom we have the most to fear, carefully watch us, and will conduct toward us according to the opinion which they have of us. We have nothing to fear from either of them, if we show a proper spirit, deal justly with all, and reverence the commands of the Most High. I devoutly pray that we may have no connection with any nation farther than is necessary for the purpose of commerce; and that we may boast only of being AMERICANS.

SOME may suppose that by the election of Mr. Jefferson we will please the French nation. Were this true, still it would be a question, whether it is prudent to do this, without necessity, at the risk of displeasing another nation. But the truth is, in my opinion, that by his election, America would expose herself to the just derision of both. My blood mounts, when I think for a moment of either British or French giving my country a President. I despise their threats, and I suspect their caresses. Let them mind their own business. I will please myself, and take care of my own concerns. How desirable soever a reputation with them may be, unless it is founded on a regard to God and our country, it cannot be solid and lasting.

WHAT would be the natural reflections of foreigners, were Mr. Jefferson our President? Would they not say? "Either the Americans have little impressions of religion and of its being essential to morality and good government, or they have few men versed in the science of government, or they are most dangerously torn by party spirit; otherwise they would not have exalted by a voluntary choice such a man to the seat of the first magistrate. Just returning from the tomb of the great and good Washington, they seem to have buried all their virtue with him. They appear now to be a weak, a divided, and an irreligious people, doomed to dissensions among themselves, and to be an easy prey to their ambitious neighbours."—Yes, my fellow citizens, there was a Washington. We shall "never look on his fellow again." "Two Washingtons come not in one age." His name was, under God, our shield and defence. He honored God, revered his sabbaths, and attended upon the institutions of his worship. He has borne testimony in his farewell address, that, "religion and morality are indispensable supports of political prosperity;" inseparably "connected with private and public felicity." He raised his country to honor and happiness by the exertion of his talents, and still more by the magic of his

virtue. Let us not insult his ashes, and debase ourselves in the sight of the world by the appointment of an improper successor.

2. CONSIDER the effects which the election of any man avowing the principles of Mr. Jefferson would have upon our citizens. The effects would be, to destroy religion, introduce immorality, and loosen all the bonds of society. Will it be said, that he is a man of too much understanding and prudence to meddle with religion, and seek to disseminate his own principles? What assurance have we of this? We remember that Hazael, when forewarned of the crimes which he would commit, answered, "But what! is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?"* And yet he afterwards did it. But Mr. Jefferson tells us openly what his principles are; and we are to presume that he will act upon them. It is a light thing with him to say there is *no God*. He wishes to see a government where the people have *no religious opinions and forms of worship*. If he should endeavour to carry these principles into operation, and we should complain, he might say, "What right had you to expect otherwise? I told you before hand; and after this information you entrusted

* II Kings, viii. 13.

"me. Had I not a better right to conclude, that
 "you rather approved of my principles, than ex-
 "pected me to renounce them?" Mr. Jefferson
 indeed has shown us, that his conduct will corres-
 pond with his principles. We have not forgotten
 the Sunday-feast of him and his friends at Frede-
 ricksburgh, in Virginia, on his return from the se-
 cond seat in government.

To do Mr. Jefferson, however, more than justice,
 let us suppose that he will make no attempts either
 by word or act to unsettle the religious belief; that
 he will not try his favorite project of a govern-
 ment without religion; and that he will not
 think it "high time for this country to get rid of
 "religion and the clergy;"* will not the station
 of President alone have a most baneful influence?
 Does not every person acquainted with human
 nature, and who is attentive to the state of manners
 in society, know that the principles and manners
 of those called the higher ranks, and especially of
 those in the administration of government, soon
 pervade all classes? Let the first magistrate be a

* This sentiment was expressed to one of the first charac-
 ters in Philadelphia, by a pupil and admirer of Mr. Jefferson.
Sequitur passimbris aquis.—I have mentioned only in one instance
 the name; but all I relate depends on the best authority. I
 shall not relate several other things, merely because I do not
 sufficiently know the authority.

professed infidel, and infidels will surround him. Let him spend the sabbath in feasting, in visiting or receiving visits, in riding abroad, but never in going to church; and to frequent public worship will become unfashionable. Infidelity will become the prattle from the highest to the lowest condition in life, and universal desoluteness will follow. "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."*

THOUGH there have been some infidels whose lives appeared to be outwardly regular, occasioned, it may be, by the constitution of body or peculiar restraints, yet they have been generally vicious. It is certain that infidelity leads to licentious manners; and these again to the destruction of all social order and happiness. Principles are the fountain which, if corrupted, will send forth impure streams. Epicurus, it is said, was exemplary in his life; but his doctrine that the supreme good of man consisted in pleasure, ruined the morals of the people. His disciples, taking his words in a gross sense, placed all their happiness in bodily pleasures and debauchery. Hume was amiable in his manners and seems to have been carried away by the pride of philosophy; but thousands have embraced his principles

as an excuse for, and an encouragement in their wickedness.* Surely, when we consider the principles which have been industriously circulated in this country, and the hold which they have taken upon the minds of many; the want of subordination in families; the dissipation; the mercenary disposition; the party interests, and the party rage; we have just occasion of great alarm. Instead of encouraging in the smallest degree what would promote and systematize (if the expression be proper) these evils, every virtuous man ought boldly to stem the torrent, and to warn aloud his countrymen of the impending danger. Indifference or despondency is ruin. A little longer and it will be too late. The malady will have seized the vitals. The whole mass will be corrupted and dissolution ensue. Who can tell, whether yet by the union and exertion of the portion of virtue left us, God may cause *that we perish not*.

3. LET me mention one consideration more of a very serious nature, and that is, the dishonor which would be done to God, and the fear of his displeasure, if an opposer of Christianity should be

Lord Rochester, during his last illness, often exclaimed, "Mr. Hobbes and the philosophers have been my ruin;" then putting his hand upon a large bible that lay beside him, he cried out with great rapture, "This, this is the true philosophy."

preferred. Were our government not elective, there would be an excuse for a weak or a bad man being exalted to the highest place. But when this depends upon our own choice, the blame must rest entirely upon ourselves; and the voice of the nation in calling a deist to the first office must be construed into no less than rebellion against God. What he said respecting the Israelites when they requested a king, he would say respecting us, "They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."* Though there is nothing in the constitution to restrict our choice, yet the open and warm preference of a manifest enemy to the religion of Christ, in a Christian nation, would be an awful symptom of the degeneracy of that nation, and I repeat it, a rebellion against God. Whatever might be the intention, the conduct would bespeak nothing else. The want of a test or a provision that the supreme magistrate should be a professor of Christianity would show the temper of the nation the more clearly, and render their conduct the more striking. We now freely declare our own choice. Would Jews or Mahometans, consistently with their belief, elect a Christian? And shall Christians be less zealous and active than them? Shall we who profess to honor the Son of

God, willingly and deliberately promote a man who dishonors him; one who, if he acts upon his belief, must oppose the propagation of what he deems an imposition upon mankind and the source of miseries. Most merciful God! forgive the thought of the heart, to take council together against thee, and against thine ANOINTED.

THE friends of Mr. Jefferson may be divided into three classes; one, who are the more intent upon his election because they believe him to be an infidel; another, who are attached to his political principles, but do not wish, on account of his infidelity, to see him President; and a third, who are in danger of being deceived and led astray by the side which they have espoused. With the first, no argument of mine can be expected to prevail. The softest name which I shall receive from them is bigot, zealot, and enthusiast. They will prefer Electors, if they can ensure them, who are infidels; and if Electors themselves, they will vote for Mr. Jefferson. To the second class nothing need be said, for they feel and will do their duty. It is with the third and last class I would reason a little, in the most solemn, affectionate, and earnest manner.

Do you believe that Mr. Jefferson is an opposer of divine revelation? Can any doubt remain in your minds after the evidence which has been pro-

duced? Or have you only a bare suspicion of him? Then you ought not to promote his election. Conscience is not safe, while there is a doubt or suspicion. Do you admit the remotest danger of the consequences which have been pointed out? Why then would you choose him? Where is the necessity of any risk at all? Are there not other characters against whom there are not the same objections, and who are qualified to administer the government? Do not apprehend me to be an advocate for the other candidates.* At the same time I will say nothing against them. They are, I have reason to believe, irreproachable. But there are many others, and you know that there are, who would fill the office of President with reputation and usefulness. Necessity, therefore, you cannot plead; and I will venture it as my serious opinion, that rather than be instrumental in the election of Mr. Jefferson, it would be more acceptable to God and beneficial to the interests of your country, to throw away your votes.

Do you say that there has long been a complaint against the measures of government; we wish to make a change; and at any rate, there can be no harm in trying other men? Be it so. But let your change be wise and prudent. Have

* Mr. Pinckney and Mr. Adams.

a regard for the honor of God, and the welfare of your country. Beware of approaching near to a surrender of judgment and conscience to any political views.

SOME time hereafter you will thank me for what I am now going to say, and pronounce it to be a salutary truth. At present you will hardly bear it. If Mr. Jefferson should be the President, and should administer the government with the highest political wisdom, your complaints will be as numerous and as grievous, in the space of a short time, as they are now. It never has been, never will be, and never can be otherwise in the present state of human affairs. Mankind are impatient under just government. The *outs* murmur against the *ins*. All the expectants of office cannot be gratified. The greater part, change ever so often, must be wofully disappointed. "Party is the madness of many for the gain of a few." "The gamester always complains that the cards are badly shuffled until he gets a good hand."

You may hear, as usual, many stories circulated, and much abuse. You may hear the ministers of Christ assailed. You may hear the facts which I have stated denied or misrepresented. If admitted, some may offer to be sureties for Mr. Jefferson, that he will not interfere with religious

concerns. I beg you not to depend upon sureties who may themselves be bankrupts in the faith. Such will seek to banter you out of your conscientious scruples, and if they cannot, will give you strong assurance. It is a case in which you cannot admit a surety. The question is not what he will *do*, but what he *is*. Is he an infidel? then you cannot elect him without betraying your Lord. No circumstance can warrant your preference of him. I beg you also to remark, that a character must be suspicious when great pains are thought necessary to clear it up. Why all these pains, and what need of sureties? There is a short and easy way to settle the whole business. Let Mr. Jefferson only set his name to the first part of the apostle's creed. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord." Can the ministers of the gospel, who are jealous for the glory of God, and the people to whom Christ is precious, require and expect less?—You will hear it said, that whatever may be the character of Mr. Jefferson, he is not worse than many of those who censure him. Were this true, it would not excuse his election. To choose a bad man because others are bad, can never be a sufficient reason, unless all are equally bad. That we have no unexceptionable characters, I

aver is not true. Besides it is not true that Mr. Jefferson is as good as his opponents, in the sense in which it ought to be taken. Though a man professing christianity may be as immoral in his conduct as a man professing infidelity, yet who of these two is the best man to put into a place of high trust and extensive influence, is totally a different question. I contend that the man professing christianity is infinitely safer; and that christians cannot consistently with the dictates of their conscience, and the obligations which they owe to their Divine Redeemer, voluntarily choose any other. The profession will have great weight with the community; it will more or less restrain the man himself, and may operate in time to the entire reformation of his life. But on the infidel we have no hold. In what way will you bind him who has broken the bands of religion asunder and cast away its cords from him?

WILL you then, my fellow-citizens, with all this evidence, and all these consequences before you, vote for electors who you believe will vote for Mr. Jefferson; or, if you are electors will you vote for him yourselves? Can you do either of these with a clear judgment, a peaceful conscience, and an unshaken hand? If you can, do it. Let nothing warp you from that line of conduct which an enlightened conscience directs, and the great

Judge of all will approve. As to myself, were Mr. Jefferson connected with me by the nearest ties of blood, and did I owe him a thousand obligations, I would not, and could not vote for him. No; sooner than stretch forth my hand to place him at the head of the nation, "Let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone."* I can exalt no man who reviles my Saviour. We have seen tokens of the divine displeasure for several years past; and should the Presidential chair be permitted to become "the seat of the scornful," I must consider it as an awful frown from Heaven, and the beginning of miseries. Natural pestilence is mercy compared with moral; and no nation can be more unhappy than to forsake God, and to be given up by him. If to this we are doomed, may the years be shortened! and may even you, the unwary instruments of drawing down the calamities, be sheltered, and obtain the forgiveness of God and your country!

To conclude, I have not set my name to this address; not because I am either afraid or ashamed; but because I wish it to be fairly judged by its own merits distinct from every other consideration. On this account I wish to be always concealed; at the same time, if any apparent necessity should occur,

I shall immediately become known. I would feel criminal had I expressed myself with less warmth. I rather fear that I have not risen to what the cause demanded. Against Mr. Jefferson I have no personal resentment. He and I can never be competitors for any place of honor and emolument. Separate him from his principles, and I could write his eulogium. Let me farther repeat, that no answer is intended in this address to his philosophical and religious principles; that the single thing intended, is to show that these principles are contrary to what we are taught in the holy scriptures, and that for this reason alone, he ought not to be honored and entrusted with the Presidency of the United States of America.

POSTSCRIPT.

BESIDES the passages which I have quoted from Mr. Jefferson's Notes, there is one of so extraordinary and dangerous a nature, that it ought not to escape animadversion. In page 100, he says, "Were it made a question whether no law, as among the savage Americans, or too much law, as among the civilized Europeans, submits man to the greatest evil, one who has seen both conditions of existence, would pronounce it to be the last; and that the sheep are happier of themselves, than under care of the wolves. It will be said, that great societies can not exist without government, The savages therefore break them into small ones." Here is a preference plainly given of savage to civilized life. When this is taken in connection with the sentiment advanced about the belief of a God, those who have read Robison and Barruel will clearly perceive the principles of the ILLUMINATI in Europe. Their leading principles, are no religion and no government; that the institution of these has introduced misery; and that they must be banished before mankind can enjoy that happiness for which nature intended them.

Who are we to understand by the *wolves*? Will Mr. Jefferson say, that he means despots or tyrants? This would be shifting the question; for he speaks of nations in which the *law* governs. In absolute governments, the *will* of the monarch, and not the *law* is supreme. In such governments, there is not *too much*, but *too little* law. It has ever been thought best in a free government to establish every thing by law, and to leave as little as possible to the arbitrary will of men; and if evil arises from the multiplicity of laws, it is a less evil than to have no law. If Mr. Jefferson means that any government is a *wolf*, in this he contradicts the apostle Paul, who calls government, "The ordinance of God," and the officers, "God's ministers." What he compares is *no law*, and *too much law*. Does he mean that the American savages have no law? In this he is mistaken. They have a government and laws which custom has established. Or, does he mean that their form of government is the best? Then he prefers monarchy or aristocracy to democracy; for their government by Sachems or chiefs partakes more of the former than of the latter. In short, I see no way to reconcile Mr. Jefferson with himself, much less with the opinions of the wisest men, and the precepts of religion. As to the savages breaking the *great societies into small ones*, I need only say that by so doing, room is made for more Sachems, but I doubt whether more freedom and happiness are introduced. Were the United States broken into several republics, more ambitious men would be gratified, but the people would be less happy.

WHAT I have principally in view, is to fix the attention upon the spirit of infidelity which the passage breathes. Some insist that before the gospel can be preached with success to the Indians, they must be civilized. If this opinion be just, then Mr. Jefferson, thinking them happier in their uncivilized state, must be opposed to preaching the gospel among them. Others assert with myself, that to preach the gospel among them is the great mean to civilize them. If this opinion be just, still Mr. Jefferson opposes the preaching of the gospel. *The sheep*, says he, *are happier of themselves, than under care of the wolves*. Thus, the happiest state of man is, according to the sage of Monticello, to be without law, without government, and without religion; to continue just as he was born, "a wild asses colt."

